

Proposing a Model for Analysing Impact of Social Media on Academic Performance of Students: A Case Study of Allameh Tabatabai University

Mamak Dadgarmehr^a, Ehram Safari^{b,*}, Mohsen Gharehkhani^c

^aTechnology, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Electronic Branch, Islamic Azad University Tehran, Iran

^bIran Telecommunication Research Center, Tehran, Iran

^cIranian E-institute of Higher Education, Tehran, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: e.safari@itrc.ac.ir

Abstract

Online social networks are found these days among all generations of internet users so that they have become a noticeable communicative tool especially for scholars and students. Academies' and faculties are increasingly using the social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Research Gate etc., for communication with potential university students as well as providing educational content. The present study aims to examine the effects of virtual social networks on educational level of the students. The social networks in Iran have never been studied in terms of the time spent on the social networks and their effects on academies performance. For this purpose, some questionnaires' in Likert spectrum were used in order to ensure the questionnaires' reliability, which were confirmed by the Political Sciences and Law Faculty. Questionnaires' validity was then confirmed by Cronbach- α at 0.821. The sample under study consists of 144 students from political sciences and law faculty of Allameh Tabatabai University. The samples were chosen randomly based on SPSS 22 and smart PLS. The obtained results suggested that there's a significant negative relation between the time spent on the social networks and the academic performance. The results also revealed that more attention to the social networks has no impact on the academic performance. In addition, factors such as students' features, their academic capabilities, prediction of their behaviors like their perception of social attitude towards social networks and their tendency toward virtual social networks are related to convenience of using the social networks. There's a relation between academic capabilities and the time spent on online social networks.

Keywords: Online social networks, University students, Academic performance, Allameh Tabatabai University

1. Introduction

Today, the world is celebrating advancement in communications technology, the scope of which has been expanded through ICT. Modern communication technologies have been undoubtedly turned the whole world into a global village, but this technology can be assimilated to a coin with positive aspects on one side and negative aspects on the other side. This contributes people to keep pace with the developments in the world. Social network sites and softwares include: Twitter, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook, What's App, Skype, Google Talk, Google Messenger, Telegram, Viber for iPhone and Android. Many people use these networks and softwares for physical or virtual interaction and communication with their old and new friends (Asemah et al., 2012). Evolution of technology has led to rapid changes in the world, while using this technology has led to discovery of a wide range of knowledge. Social networks allow tens of thousands of people to carry out diverse professional, educational and social activities at home, community, and other social settings and get access to important information on

education, health, nutrition, medicine, regulations, etc., with special emphasis on general health aspects, especially in the field of medicine and treatment (Masic et al., 2012). In addition to entertainment, the social networks are used to get access to and disseminate learning information (Tonta, 2009). Application of the social networks in pursuit of educational goals has been the subject of extensive studies (Isik, 2013). The social networks not only affect the workplace and personal life of individuals, but also more importantly, provide a new perspective towards education (Ponnudura, 2013). The widespread use of the social network by students in recent decades is mainly due to easy access to devices such as smartphones, tablets, Apple mobile phones, iPads and laptops that are connected to the internet (Paul et al., 2012). Addiction to the social networks has dramatically increased during the recent years. The effect of social networks on academic performance of the students is increasingly worrisome. The student's academic performance is presented by their scores (Kirschner et al., 2010) and this is a concern for the universities. Students who spend a lot of time on the social networks and become dependent on them believe that the social networks have